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Programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005

Report of the Secretary-General*

Addendum:

Comprehensive report on the progress of and lessons learned from the redeployment experiment authorized in paragraph 14 of resolution 58/270

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/270 of 23 December 2003. In paragraph 14 of that resolution, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, during the course of the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005, to commence, on an experimental basis, with the redeployment of posts as necessary to meet the evolving needs of the Organization in attaining its mandated programmes and activities, in accordance with the following principles:

(a) The experiment shall be limited to the redeployment of up to 50 posts Organization-wide;

(b) The experiment shall not imply any change in the human resources management policies of the Organization;

(c) The proposed programme budget shall remain the principal instrument in which the Secretary-General sets out the resources and staffing requirements of the Organization;

(d) The authority to redeploy posts shall in no way prevent the Secretary-General from requesting additional posts during the course of the experiment;

* The present report is being issued at the present time to reflect the latest data available.

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(e) The experiment shall not exacerbate high vacancy rates in any budget sections;

(f) The experiment shall not apply to language services;

(g) Redeployment between sections shall be carried out only after all possibilities of using resources available within budget sections that will benefit from the transfer have been exhaustively explored;

(h) The experiment shall not be implemented as a result of General Assembly resolutions calling for the implementation of decisions "within existing resources";

(i) Reporting to the General Assembly shall be carried out in the context of the annual budget performance reports;

(j) The Secretary-General is requested to provide information periodically to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on actions taken.

2. In paragraphs 5 and 16, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the experiment shall in no way limit opportunities for external recruitment for posts at any level and to report to the Assembly at its resumed fifty-ninth session on the implications of the experiment for human resources management policies. In paragraph 17, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit, through the Advisory Committee, a comprehensive report for consideration by the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the progress of and lessons learned from the experiment. The present report has been prepared in compliance with the Assembly's request contained in paragraph 17.

II. Background

3. Resolution 58/270 set out reporting arrangements for the redeployment of posts experiment for the biennium 2004-2005 consisting of a series of reports, namely, in the context of the first performance report, in the context of the second performance report, a report on the implications of the experiment for human resources management policies to be submitted at the resumed fifty-ninth session and a comprehensive report to be submitted at the sixtieth session of the General Assembly. In accordance with the foregoing, the first performance report included information on the experience as of November 2004 and, in particular, highlighted difficulties in the initial implementation of the experiment (see A/59/578, paras. 51-54). At the resumed fifty-ninth session, the Secretary-General reported some progress in the implementation of the experiment and indicated that while no implications for human resources management policies had been noted thus far, the issue would be addressed in the context of the comprehensive report to be submitted to the Assembly at its sixtieth session (see A/59/753).

4. In the main part of the second performance report for the biennium 2004-2005 (A/60/572), the Secretary-General summarizes the movement of posts between budget sections under the experiment, as well as the related movement of resources required to be effected in the context of the performance report. The present document addresses the request of the General Assembly in paragraph 17 of its

resolution 58/270 for a comprehensive report on the progress of and lessons learned from the experiment, including the following aspects:

(a) Implications for the relevant financial regulations and rules of the Organization;

(b) Additional implications, if any, for human resources management policies;

(c) Constraints encountered by the Secretary-General in exercising the flexibility granted to him in General Assembly resolutions 48/228 C of 29 July 1994 and 50/214 of 23 December 1995, as well as in regulation 5.6 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations (ST/SGB/2003/7);

(d) Measures to ensure that such a policy will not have any negative impact on sections with high vacancy rates;

(e) An elaboration of the elements requested in paragraph 35 of its resolution 57/300 of 20 December 2002;

(f) Recommendations concerning the possible application of this approach to managing the staffing table in future.

III. Redeployments implemented under the experiment

5. A total of 17 posts have been redeployed in the 2004-2005 biennium under the experiment authorized in resolution 58/270. Five of these posts were previously reported in March 2005 in the note by the Secretary-General on the redeployment of posts (A/59/753) and have been taken into account in preparing the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007. As regards the 12 posts redeployed since the preparation of the proposed programme budget, a decision is required by the General Assembly to authorize the continuation of these redeployments, where required, in the biennium 2006-2007. Taking into account the experience so far (detailed in section IV below), as well as an assessment of current needs, it is proposed to account for the continuation of 5 of these 12 redeployments in setting the initial staffing table for the biennium 2006-2007.

6. While the remaining seven redeployments would not be reflected in the initial staffing table for 2006-2007, provisions will be made for the continuation of these activities where required in that biennium. This will include the internal redeployment of authorized staffing for the programmes concerned, as well as the redeployment of posts between programmes, should the General Assembly decide to extend the arrangements initially authorized on an experimental basis for the biennium 2004-2005.

7. A summary of the 17 redeployments effected in the biennium 2004-2005 under the arrangements authorized in resolution 58/270 is contained in the annex to the present report.

8. The five posts reflected in section I of the annex were previously referred to in the note of the Secretary-General on the redeployment of posts (A/59/753). As reflected in that document, one P-5 post has been redeployed from the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management to the Landlocked Developing Countries Unit within the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed

Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. In exchange, one P-4 post has been redeployed from the Office of the High Representative to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management. The other three post movements relate to the realignment of staffing under the existing arrangements for the provision of administrative support by the United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV) to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. Following the integration of information technology and human resource functions into the Division of Management at UNOV, these three posts (1 P-3 and 1 P-2 in the Information Technology Service and 1 General Service (principal level) in the Human Resources Management Service) have been redeployed so as to be properly reflected under Administration, Vienna, in line with the functions being carried out.

9. As regards the 12 posts redeployed during the latter half of 2005, these redeployments address a number of needs. They are detailed as follows:

(a) Two P-2 posts have been redeployed from the Office of Central Support Services (Coordination and Support Service, Information and Technology Services Division, and Procurement Service, Facilities and Commercial Services Division) to strengthen mediation capacity in each of the two Africa Divisions in the Department of Political Affairs;

(b) One P-3 post has been redeployed from the Office of Human Resources Management to the Department of Public Information to carry out the function of Intranet Content Editor within a dedicated unit focused on the revamping of i-Seek. Accordingly, editorial responsibilities for the Secretariat News now rest with the Department of Public Information;

(c) Five posts have been redeployed to establish the secretariat of the Policy and Management Committees. The Policy Committee focuses on issues requiring strategic guidance and decisions and identifies emerging issues, while the Management Committee deals with internal reform and management-related issues. One P-5 post and one P-3 have been redeployed from the secretariat of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security, Department of Political Affairs, and the General Legal Division, Office of Legal Affairs, respectively. One P-5 post has been redeployed from the Development Information Services Division, Economic Commission for Africa. One P-4 post and one P-2 post have been redeployed from the Emerging Social Issues Division and the Poverty and Development Division respectively, within the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP);

(d) One P-4 post has been redeployed from the Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, to the Administrative Law Unit, Office of Human Resources Management, to assist in handling the large number of disciplinary cases that have been referred to the Office. The functions to be carried out include conducting extensive legal research and analysis, preparing documentation and correspondence relevant to appellate and disciplinary proceedings and representing the Secretary-General in oral proceedings before the Joint Appeals Board and the Joint Disciplinary Committee;

(e) Two posts have been redeployed to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to support follow-up of the World Summit Outcome. One P-5 post has been redeployed from the Development Management Division, Economic Commission for Africa, to service the General Assembly on cross-cutting issues and the

implementation of related resolutions. One P-4 post has been redeployed from the executive direction and management component of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean to provide support to the Counter-Terrorism Task Force;

(f) One D-1 post, the Director of the United Nations Information Centre in Washington, D.C., has been redeployed to report directly to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, to strengthen high-level political liaison, manage working relationships with the media, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, research centres and various international organizations.

10. In addition to the 17 posts referred to above, another 14 posts were also identified for possible redeployment, but were not redeployed during the course of the biennium 2004-2005. These 14 posts, consisting of 6 P-3 and 8 P-2 posts, remain in the respective budget sections.

IV. Lessons learned

11. Some of the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the experiment have been mentioned in previous reports. In particular, the experience highlighted inherent difficulties in attempting to arrive at a definitive list of surplus staffing resources within a particular programme that are therefore available for redeployment to another programme for either intermediate or long-term periods. A major prerequisite for such transfers would be that the posts were not needed to implement the activities for which they were approved or to implement other priority mandated activities within the same section. The likelihood of identifying such surplus staffing is little, given the mid-biennium review of staffing allocations in the context of budget preparations for the next biennium, as well as the regular review of resource allocation in the context of the adoption of new or revised mandates which arise during the course of each biennium. Taking into account these regular reviews of staffing allocations, it should not be assumed that the availability of the authorization itself would automatically give rise to full use within any given biennium (i.e. the maximum of 50 posts redeployed).

12. Having said the foregoing, the authorization has been utilized in the latter part of the biennium 2004-2005. Implementation of the experiment has been carried out in a gradual manner, with due emphasis placed on ensuring implementation through a consistent central mechanism. The Executive Office of the Secretary-General has centrally managed the redeployment process in collaboration with the Office of Human Resources Management and the Office of Programme Planning and Budget and Accounts.

13. As mentioned above, given the term of the experiment, which was authorized for the biennium 2004-2005, a certain degree of uncertainty has arisen regarding the continuation of redeployments in the biennium 2006-2007. The experiment has been implemented so far on the assumption that the authorization would be made available to meet evolving staffing needs of the Organization in the forthcoming biennium. Consequently, a decision is required by the General Assembly to authorize the continuation of such redeployments, where required, in the biennium 2006-2007.

14. A number of specific aspects of the experiment are addressed below, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 58/270.

Implications for the relevant financial regulations and rules of the Organization

15. The implementation of the authorization to redeploy up to 50 posts has not resulted in any implications for the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. Further information with regard to regulation 5.6 and rule 105.1 is provided in paragraphs 23 and 24 below.

Implications for human resources management policies

16. Redeployments have been carried out in accordance with paragraph 14 (b) of resolution 58/270, which lays down that the experiment shall not imply any change in the human resources management policies of the Organization. Implementation was generally limited to vacant posts, as in most cases the skills set of the staff members from the area from which the post was originally placed did not fit the needs of the area to which posts were redeployed. Posts redeployed for an expected duration of less than one year have been filled through lateral reassignment or short-term recruitment, under established procedures.

Constraints encountered by the Secretary-General in exercising the flexibility granted to him in General Assembly resolutions 48/228 C of 29 July 1994 and 50/214 of 23 December 1995, as well as in regulation 5.6 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations

17. Resolutions 48/228 C and 50/214 are addressed in paragraphs 18 to 22 below, and regulation 5.6 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations is addressed in paragraphs 23 and 24.

18. In paragraph 2 of its resolution 48/228 C, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in paragraph 8 of its report (A/48/7/Add.11). In paragraph 8 of its report, the Advisory Committee requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at its forty-ninth session on how current procedures could be changed in order to achieve the following objectives: (a) granting to the Secretary-General the authority to reclassify posts up to the P-5 level, while ensuring that the relationship between the overall numbers for each grade level is maintained; (b) ensuring that the existing appropriations are not exceeded; and (c) ensuring that adequate control by the Secretariat and monitoring by the Assembly are in place, including procedures for providing information to the Advisory Committee and the Assembly on action taken by the Secretary-General under his authority.

19. The requested report was submitted by the Secretary-General in document A/49/339 and Corr.1. The related observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee are contained in paragraphs 98 to 104 of its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 (A/50/7 and Corr.1). In paragraph 104 of its report, the Advisory Committee recommended a procedure for the implementation of reclassification of posts in the course of a biennium. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee was subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/214 on questions relating to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

20. In accordance with that procedure:

(a) When there is no net change in the distribution of posts in the programme budget as approved by the General Assembly, the Secretary-General would have the flexibility to reclassify posts up to the P-5 level;

(b) Should the Secretary-General change distribution of posts in the programme budget through reclassification by plus or minus 0.5 per cent in each grade, ensuring that the existing appropriation is not exceeded, the changes would be submitted to the General Assembly for approval in the context of the performance report, at which point the Assembly could require a future correction, if necessary;

(c) All changes to the staffing table during the biennium, including in the classification of posts, should be explained by the Secretary-General in the proposed programme budget for the next biennium.

21. The authorization detailed above provides a procedure for the implementation of reclassification of posts in the course of a biennium, with an explanation of all changes in the proposed programme budget for the next biennium, or in some instances in the performance report. It should be noted that budget preparation is initiated more than one year in advance of the start of a biennium in order to meet scheduled intergovernmental reviews. Given the timing of budget preparation and the need of offices to evaluate their staffing requirements as a whole, reclassifications have practically been included in the context of budget proposals being prepared, for upfront consideration and review through the legislative process, rather than implemented in advance with subsequent review and approval by the General Assembly at a later date. In addition to changes in functions, reclassifications are often related to organizational changes, which are best detailed in the overall context of budget proposals.

22. Having said the foregoing, the authorization is a valid option for realigning post levels. It has been utilized in the context of the first performance report for the biennium 2000-2001 to implement the reclassification of a General Service post to the P-2 level at ESCAP (see A/55/645, para. 38). Furthermore, while other reclassifications have not been reported on a post facto basis in performance reports under the authorization, such transactions have routinely been reflected, as necessary, in performance reports. In this regard, attention is drawn to the following reclassifications reported in the context of first performance reports:

(a) Six Local level posts in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) reclassified to the Professional level in the context of the first performance report for 1996-1997 (see A/C.5/51/38, para. 29);

(b) One Field Service post to the P-4 level in ECLAC in the context of the first performance report for the biennium 2004-2005 (see A/59/578, para. 55);

(c) Five National Officer posts to the P-3 level in the Department of Public Information in the context of the first performance report for the biennium 2004-2005 (see A/59/578, paras. 56 and 57).

23. Regulation 5.1 and Rule 105.1 of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations are also relevant in assessing constraints encountered in regulation 5.6 in the implementation of the experiment to redeploy up to 50 posts in the course of the biennium 2004-2005. Regulations 5.1 and 5.6, and rule 105.1 read as follows:

"Regulation 5.1. The appropriations voted by the General Assembly shall constitute an authorization to the Secretary-General to incur obligations and make payments for the purposes for which the appropriations were voted and up to the amounts so voted.

"Regulation 5.6. No transfer between appropriation sections may be made without authorization by the General Assembly.

"Rule 105.1. The Under-Secretary-General for Management shall obtain the approval of the Advisory Committee in order to transfer credits between programme budget appropriations in those instances where the General Assembly has delegated its authority under regulation 5.6 to the Committee."

24. The implementation of the experiment to redeploy posts has not required an exception to the regulations and rule set out above. While posts have been redeployed under the terms of resolution 58/270, the related required transfers of resources between sections have been reflected in the performance report for the approval of the General Assembly.

Measures to ensure that such a policy will not have any negative impact on sections with high vacancy rates

25. The redeployment of posts in the biennium 2004-2005 under the terms of resolution 58/270 has not had a negative impact on sections with high vacancy rates. One post has been redeployed from eight sections, two posts from three sections and three posts in the case of one budget section. In five of these instances, offices involved in the outward redeployment of a post at one level have also benefited from the inward redeployment of a post at another level. In order to ensure no resulting human resources implications, the internal reviews carried out to identify possible posts for outward redeployment have focused on current and forecasted vacancies and the rationalization of staffing allocation in light of work programme implementation. However, programmes with high vacancy rates have not been targeted; instead, the approach has, in general, been based on such individual internal reviews, carried out by programmes with more than 50 regular budget posts, with the aim of identifying one or two posts for possible outward redeployment.

Elaboration of the elements requested in paragraph 35 of General Assembly resolution 57/300

26. In paragraph 35 of its resolution 57/300, the General Assembly took note of the request of the Secretary-General for a degree of flexibility to reallocate resources between programmes and between allocations for personnel and other allocations within a single budget period and in exceptional circumstances and requested the Secretary-General to develop criteria for the use of any such authorization, proposed modalities for reporting the duration and programmatic impacts of reallocations, including specification of the exceptional circumstances in which it would be used, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its fifty-eighth session. While the present report addresses the implementation of the redeployment of posts experiment, the information requested in paragraph 35 of resolution 57/300 will be reported in the context of the additional reforms requested to make more efficient use of the financial and human resources available to the Organization (2005 World Summit Outcome) and the associated review in progress.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

27. **The experience to date is quite limited. Should the General Assembly decide to extend the authorization to the biennium 2006-2007, the utilization of the authorization will continue to be monitored and reported in the context of performance reports. The Assembly is requested to take the following specific actions:**

(a) **Approve the redeployment of the five posts detailed in section II (a) of the annex to the present report in the biennium 2006-2007;**

(b) **Extend the authorization to redeploy posts, as necessary, to the biennium 2006-2007 to meet the evolving needs of the Organization in attaining its mandated programmes and activities.**

Annex

Redeployments effected under the experiment to redeploy up to 50 posts authorized in General Assembly resolution 58/270

*Receiving budget section**	*D-1*	*P-5*	*P-4*	*P-3*	*P-2*	*GS (PL)*	*Total*	*Releasing section*
I. Posts redeployed as of the time of preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007 (see A/59/753)								
10. Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	28A. Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management
28A. Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Management	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	10. Least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States
28F. Administration, Vienna	—	—	—	1	1	1	3	16. International drug control, crime prevention and criminal justice
Total	**—**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**5**	
II. Posts redeployed subsequent to the preparation of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2006-2007								
A. Redeployments which are proposed to be taken into account in the initial staffing table for the biennium 2006-2007								
3. Political affairs	—	—	—	—	2	—	2	28D. Office of Central Support Services
27. Public information	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	28C. Office of Human Resources Management
1. Overall policymaking, direction and coordination	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	3. Political affairs
	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	8. Legal affairs
Subtotal	**—**	**1**	**—**	**2**	**2**	**—**	**5**	
B. Redeployments which would not be taken into account in the initial staffing table for the biennium 2006-2007 (posts continue to be reflected under the originating budget section)								
28C. Office of Human Resources Management	—	—	1		—	—	1	9. Economic and social affairs
1. Overall policymaking, direction and coordination	—	2	—	—	—	—	2	17. Economic and social development in Africa
	—	—	1	—	1	—	2	18. Economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific
	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	20. Economic and social development in Latin America and the Caribbean
	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	27. Public information
Subtotal	**1**	**2**	**3**	**—**	**1**	**—**	**7**	
Total	**1**	**3**	**3**	**2**	**3**	**—**	**12**	
Grand total I + II	**1**	**4**	**4**	**3**	**4**	**1**	**17**	

* Reflects numbering of budget sections for the biennium 2006-2007.